

REMARKS

The claims are divided into Groups I, II, and III. The Examiner asserts that Group I includes claims 1-41, 44-72, and 80-82, which are drawn to methods for multiple computer communication using key exchange; Group II includes claims 73-75 and 77-79, which are drawn to establishing a connection between multiple computers; and Group III includes claims 42-43 and 76, which are drawn to methods for preventing unauthorized intrusion or interference between two communication terminals. However, Applicant respectfully submits that the claims in each of Groups I, II, and III relate to the Home Agent assignment. Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that the claims in Groups I, II, and III should be examined together.


The restriction requirement states that the inventions IA and IB are distinct because they are related as subcombinations. More particularly, the Examiner states that invention I has separate utility such as cryptographic protection of data communicated between multiple machines; invention II has a separate utility such as establishing the initial connection between the computers; invention III has a separate utility such as preventing unauthorized communication between the computers. However, Applicant respectfully submits that since each of the claims relates to the assignment of a Home Agent, the claims of Groups I, II, and III should be examined together.

Even if the claims are drawn to patentably distinct or independent inventions, MPEP § 803 provides that "[i]f the search and examination of an entire application can be made without serious burden, the examiner must examine it on the merits, even though it includes claims to distinct or independent inventions." Although the scope of the claims of Groups I, II, and III and Applicant agrees that the claims are patentably distinct, many of the claimed features are similar. For instance, claim 1 of Group I relates to the assignment of a Home Agent during the registration process. Similarly, claim 73 of Group II also relates to the assignment of a Home Agent during the registration process. Accordingly, although it is acknowledged that the

inventions of Groups I, II, and III are patentably distinct, Applicant respectfully submits that it would not unduly burden the examiner to simultaneously examine the claims of Groups I, II, and III.

Should the Examiner have any questions concerning this matter, the undersigned can be reached at the telephone number set out below.

Respectfully submitted,
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